

OF
FEB
AT

North of America
Luke Vibert

NŌBUKAZU TAKEMURA

Geoff Farina
Bardo Pond

Calvin Johnson
Keiji Haino



Issue 160 June 2001 Free with proof of purchase

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRI/SAT
BREW & VIEW MOVIES AT 8:00 PM JUNE 03 PULP FICTION JUNE 10 ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER JUNE 17 TRAINSPOTTING JUNE 24 THE PROFESSIONAL REWIND! WITH DJ SALAMANDER ROOTS, DUB & DANCEHALL 9:30PM (AFTER BREW & VIEW)	atomique presents Lucky Mondays Live! JUNE 04 (TBA) JUNE 11 VICTORIA'S MOST DANGEROUS HIP HOPPERS 1/2 BLACK ITALIANZ PLUS GUESTS (TBA) JUNE 18 (TBA) JUNE 25 DRUM 'N' BASS & JUNGLE BIG MUFF and LATE FOR BINGO	stylus presents STYLIN' WITH DJ SCOTTY STYLUS PLUS WEEKLY GUESTS JUNE 05 VERSE & MURGE vs. MATT THE ALIEN & KILGORE JUNE 12 DJ SIMON JUNE 19 SCOTTY'S CD RELEASE PARTY JUNE 26 SCOTTY plus GUEST HIP HOP · FUNK REGGAE · HOUSE DRUM 'N' BASS · BREAKS	STIR FRY WITH DJs VERSE, SALAMANDER, MURGE, AND PHLO FEATURING MCs DEMOE AND JUST B HIP HOP REGGAE RARE GROOVE ASSORTED EXOTIC BEATZ	VOX  WITH DJs KITA KAZE LAPPELECTRO, VELVET AND THE HEAVY LUVA VELVET COLLECTIVE VOCAL HOUSE GARAGE DISCO · FUNK	Erotic City DJ BELLYFISH LUCKY RESIDENT, VELVET AND DJ KITA KAZE VOX, LAPPELECTRO SEXIFIED BEATS TO SHAKE YO' ASS URBA-FUNK VISUALS BY COMBINE

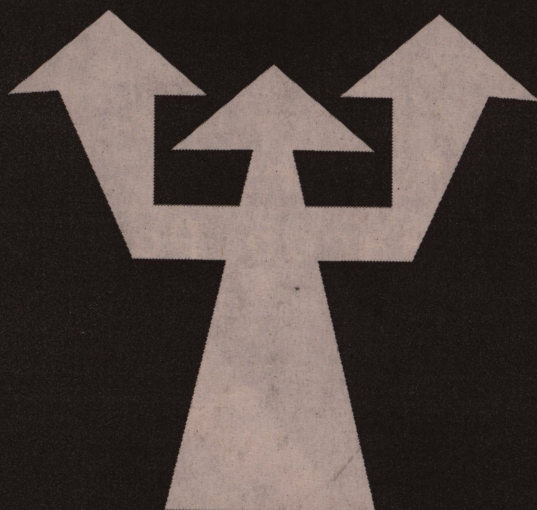
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Can you not feel the odyssey of the strange sucking boy?

Offbeat Magazine.

June 2001. Issue 160. **Editor:** John Welk. **Production Editor:** Danielle Prokop. **Reviews Editor:** Sara Young.

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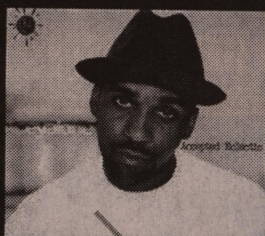
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Recently my TPC class at School District #61 has been asked to do a magazine review on some local magazines. I chose to do Offbeat because I had heard it was one of the better local magazines.

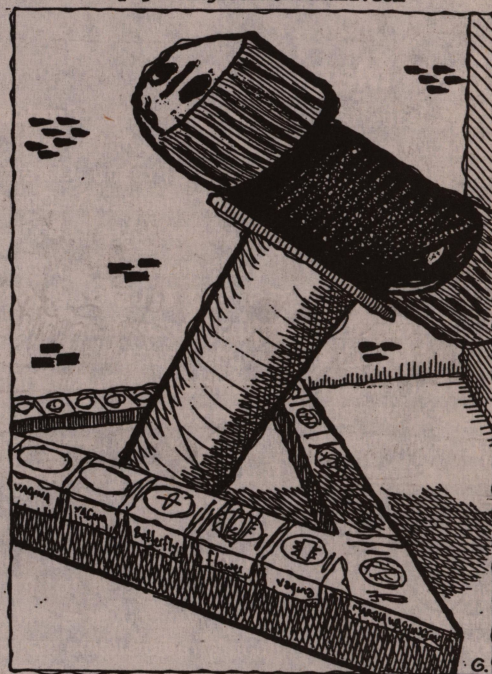
To my surprise my review was rather harsh towards some of the writers, for instance there was one article where an author was writing about how he went on the road with The Bullfrog Band. After reading this article, I further couldn't believe that a writer with such blatant lack of skills would ever be allowed to get on such a project, I could not believe that you the editor would even consider publishing his article. Sure he loves The Bullfrog Band, but he gives no evidence as to why this band is so great as. His entire article was pretty much a blowjob on paper. This was only the worst article; there were many runners up for this title.

I guess what I'm trying to say Mr. Editor is learn how to do your job, if you want people to read your little magazine you should maybe think of reading your articles before you publish them. And maybe think of hiring some new writers cause if they are anything like you I'm sure the magazine could do better.

Sincerely,
Dan Robinson

aquaflesh #26

by garethgaudin@hotmail.com

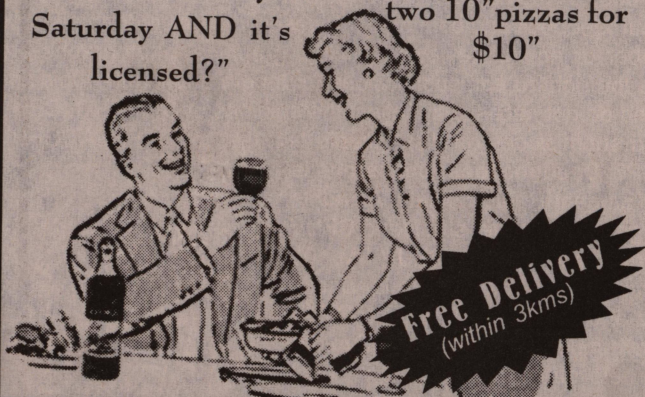


NO ONE KNOWS QUITE HOW IT HAPPENED, BUT IT APPEARS THAT CLAES OLDENBURG'S "LIPSTICK (ASCENDING) ON CATERPILLAR TRACKS" HAS DEFILED JUDY CHICAGO'S "THE DINNER PARTY"!

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dry socket

Dear Readers,

How are you? Me? I'm the usual: eating sherbet, smiling behind my hands and dreaming of swimming. But aside from the usual, something strange just happened. You know when you plug your nose and blow air out of it to pop your ears? (When you're ascending or descending in altitude and the pressure makes your head muffled and scruffled.) Anyhow, I did just that and my left tear gland puffed up with air. How odd. What a diversion!

But, this makes me think: if I am able to do that, then maybe I could squirt milk out of my eye like that guy from Ripley's Believe It or Not. When I saw him do that, I was truly in love. Any man who can suck milk up his nose and squirt it out his tear duct could be sure to win my heart. I've mentioned this before, so obviously it's something of a fascination to me. Maybe I will scan the personals this week and see if any of them read: "charming young man, likes romantic walks on the beach, cocktails at midnight and is not afraid to cry or squirt milk out of his eye."

Maybe I'll take out a personal too: "witty, charismatic female, sensitive and intellectual. Nice tits, kind of anaemic." Then if people called me, I could breathe really hard into the phone for a couple of minutes and send them a bill for \$10. Ah, who am I kidding. I could never defile the personal ads with that kind of insincerity. That would just be horribly wicked.

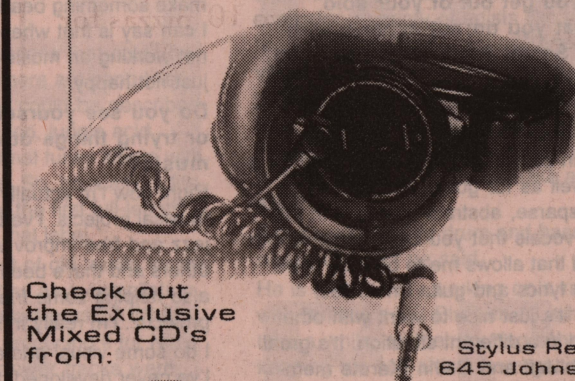
Enough talk, go enjoy the sun for me, while I get paler and paler.

-Danielle P.



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Geoff Farina



Irrational modest beauty

by Nicolas Frenette

Geoff Farina has grown in popularity through his work with *Karate* and the *Secret Stars*. On his new solo album *Reverse Eclipse*, he humbly takes the spotlight to further document his musical explorations. This hard-working artist has been writing songs and playing music daily for several years. He took a few moments to answer a few questions concerning his work, his art, and his inspirations.

What do you get out of your solo project that you do not achieve with *Karate* or *Secret Stars* (musically and personally)?

Musically, I'd say that they're just two different areas of interest. I'm definitely interested in composing and performing for a band, as well as for guitar and vocals. There's a sparse, abstract quality with just guitar and vocals that you can't achieve with a band and that allows me to be a bit more playful with lyrics and guitar melodies. Personally, it's just nice to work with other people, and in a different situation. It's great to work with Jeff and Gavin [*Karate* members], but we do so much together that sometimes it's nice to be responsible for my own words and music. Not to have to think

of others or compose in a situation with others.

I read that you write about ten to fifteen songs per year on your own on top of writing songs with your other bands. Where does this productive amount of songwriting stem from?

I wouldn't call ten or fifteen songs a year very prolific. It's actually a very slow process. I'd say what motivates it is simply a Rilke-ian belief in beauty, the irrational need to make something beautiful or at least to try. All I can say is that when I don't do it--when I'm not working on music--I get frustrated and I'm just not happy.

Do you see yourself slowing down and/or trying things other than playing music?

Right now I'm actually working on a lot of musical projects. I've been playing a lot of jazz and free-improv with Gavin and some others and that's been really amazing. I'm also helping some friends with their projects...I'm really trying to do more of that. I do some visual arts and I always have, but I've never developed it enough. It's really fulfilling but it's hard for me because I just never practiced it enough to do something really significant. I think someday I'd like to try,

but for now I'm just trying to keep up with my music schedule and I'm happy with that.

Do you write for your own pleasure or the listeners?

Both, I'd say. The two are related. Writing is a social activity and would have no meaning without an audience, even though it's seemingly "personal"... in a sense an audience has an affect on anything I write, at least indirectly.

Who inspires you musically and lyrically?

Lately I've been listening a lot to improvised music like Anthony Braxton, Mat Maneri, Joe Morris, Nels Cline, and others. I've really been inspired by improvised music over the past few years, and I've been playing that way a lot. I've also been listening to some Japanese Gagakumusic that I love, and a lot of 70's improvised rock, like This Heat and Soft Machine. Lyrically, there are so many things. I write every day and read every day, so I could never trace a genealogy of my influences. Everything from Frank Ohara to Miyamoto Musashi has inspired me lately, and so much more before that.

Always modest and never obnoxious, this gentleman plays some fine poesy.

L.U.K.E V.i.b.e.r.t

...my friends call me christ



by Shaun Stewart

I'm having a conversation in the Neptune Soundbar with this really nice British DJ who I'm about to interview. But I've got a little problem: I don't know what to call him. The DJ's given name is Luke Vibert. He's also known as Plug, a name given to him when he was in school because of his two prominent front teeth. Now he's usually referred to as Wagon Christ, a name he got from an old Robert Crumb comic, and he insists it is the only name he uses now. "I really wanted a name that was un-techno, that was more like an alternative rock band than anything," he explains. "It's just a weird name that doesn't really mean anything."

Not that he has to work too hard to disguise his style. There are as many different

electronica genre descriptions that could be applied to his music as there are song titles. His new album, *Musipal*, could be described as a sort of ambient techno, jungle acid, breakbeat, hip-hop, minimal funky album with drum 'n' bass influences. So, basically, it fits right in on Ninja Tune as the first full-length Wagon Christ album on that label.

Vibert got to pull out a lot of old tracks for this album, which he describes as a compilation of "greatest never-released tracks." When he finally got around to producing it for Ninja Tune, he found all his newer tracks were more acid techno style than his usual sampled stuff that would fit in with the label, so he picked some of his unreleased classics and threw them together. The result

is an album that will never be played on your local top 40 station, but has armchair music fans bobbing their heads across the globe.

Wagon Christ makes his bizarre style of music by using samples of old records mixed with his own keyboard tracks. He says that the piano is "the only thing that I play properly," although he does play drums, guitar and bass on some tracks. But the flavour really comes from the samples.

"I get such a buzz out of sampling some horrible noise off a horrible record and making it sound nice," he says. And that's exactly what he does—bringing his club DJ mixing mentality into his records.

Trying to describe Vibert's live DJ show is just as hard as describing his albums. He likes to play his "harshes records" live, with a little of his own stuff tossed into the mix. The show he played May 6th at Neptune featured a heavy mix of hip-hop and bigbeat music, with some Beastie Boys played, as well as some of Vibert's own stuff.

"I'll play five or six of my own tracks, usually unreleased ones," he says. "As well as some good exclusives from Aphex Twin."

It's nice to have friends in the business who can give you exclusive pieces of music; Vibert knows Aphex Twin's Richard James from his hometown, Cornwall, England. It was here that Vibert got his start in the music industry, playing "bass really badly in a dodgy punk band." It was a style of music that he wasn't too pleased with, so his punk days didn't last too long.

"I got fed up with touring and touring, traveling around playing to people who didn't even like it," he says of his short punk phase. "So I just started making music in my bedroom." It started as just a fun way to pass the time—Vibert had never intended for his bedroom recordings (he still makes his tracks on his Atari computer which is, yes, in his bedroom) to reach a major audience. But they got out a few years after he started making them when an old friend from school started the Rephlex label and released his first album, *Weirs*. Vibert has now released eight full-length albums, as well as remixed songs for a variety of artists like Nine Inch Nails, Coldcut, DJ Food, and Tortoise.

Vibert is now working on a number of projects. Unfortunately for drum 'n' bass fans, another Plug album is not one of them. He says he just doesn't make enough drum 'n' bass music anymore to make a full-length album.

"I just stick the odd drum and bass track on whatever I do," he said.

He is also "slowly working on a rap album" with Bullfrog's MC BluRum 13, which may take a while, as their touring schedules are keeping the two artists from getting together to work. He also says he'll "produce all the acid stuff sometime, and that'll be Luke Vibert," not Wagon Christ. Well, damn. I

thought he'd finally settled on the one name.
photo by Grubby

I ★ M MORE IMPORTANT IN THE U.S.A.

...an interview with Calvin Johnson

by Sara Young

Calvin Johnson makes a good point when I ask him about his tea collection. He informs me that, although he likes to drink tea, "it's not something that you really want to collect because it would, you know, get stale." Some might feel satisfied with this little bit of wisdom, but Calvin's knowledge is not limited to the subject of tea. Calvin Johnson is the Renaissance man of independent rock. He has performed in several bands, including the Beat Happening, the Go-Team (with Kurt Cobain), the Halo Benders (with Doug Martsch of Built to Spill), and Dub Narcotic Sound System. He is also the founder of K Records, an independent label out of Olympia, Washington, and a highly productive

producer.

Despite his crowded musical plate, Calvin seems so laid-back that it's hard to believe he gets anything done. When asked about why the Beat Happening didn't release any new material for 7 years, Calvin says stuff like, "oh, just the way it all worked out, you know...just kinda worked out that way." I get a slightly more definite response when I ask him about his solo work. "Um, I'm working on that, yeah," says Calvin. "I don't have any date planned for releasing that though." He reverts to the obscure, again, when he describes his solo style as "oh, just me, playing guitar and singing and stuff."

With his indie-God status, it seems strange that Calvin Johnson would have musical influences of his own, but he maintains that Half-Japanese "were an inspiration and an influence" on his work in the Beat Happening. "In terms of making up some songs and playing them pretty straight ahead...but in my own style," Calvin says, "I am influenced by, like, Jason Traeger, or the Microphones, or Mirah."

All three of these influences have released material on Calvin's K Records, along with such diverse talent as Chicks on Speed, the Black Anger Movement, and Jon Spencer. For Calvin, K Records has meant, "working with the people that it made sense to work with. And, um, I certainly, yeah, definitely will continue to work with the people who are interesting, and exciting to me." The bands who are interesting and exciting, in Calvin's mind, are those who "have a real strong vision of their music and what they want to do with it...and

they're probably good songwriters and they're expressing themselves in a way that seems really provocative." This criteria leaves Calvin open to working with people who work in a multitude of musical styles, and explains the diversity of bands on K. Calvin has produced recordings for bands like Modest Mouse, the Make-up, Enemy Mine and Beck since he opened Dub Narcotic Studios in 1993. Calvin says his producing style "is just straight ahead, like, I'm just sort of gettin' it down, you know, [the artists] kind of have their ideas of what they want to do." Calvin also enjoys being involved in the conceptual aspect of creating an album though. "Some people are more interested in having me be involved in the idea part of it, and that's always a lot of fun, but I don't like to impose, but, you know, working with the Make Up or something, they were a lot more open to ideas."

Calvin has had some pretty damn good ideas—he was instrumental in conceiving and organising the International Pop Underground Festival in 1991. For Calvin, the festival "was just a fun thing to do, you know, get a lot of people there and have some bands play." He points out that "nowadays, it doesn't seem so significant because it happens so often, which is great. At the time, having shows with several hundred people, several nights in a row, it just wasn't as common."

Now, festivals like Ladyfest and Yo-Yo a Go-Go happen all of the time. Several bands on K Records (the Microphones, Mirah, Internal/External) will be playing this year's Yo-Yo festival (July 17-21 in Olympia), but Calvin is not sure what his role will be this year. He says, "I mean, I'm not really involved in Yo-Yo-Go-Go, except usually as, like, just as someone who shows up and goes to shows and stuff, except usually I do DJ one night during the course of Yo-Yo."

Calvin has worked with an assortment of Canadian artists, including, "Oh, you know, Mecca Normal, Fifth Column, Gaze,

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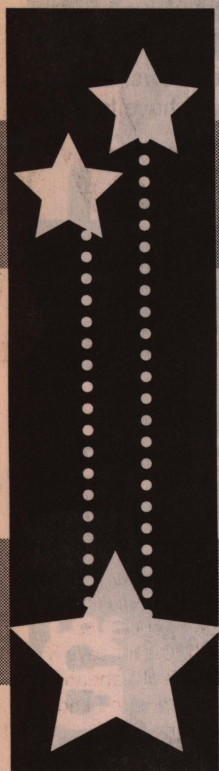


photo by Michael Lavine

Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet, um, yeah, quite a few over the years....Of course we worked with Wandering Lucy as well, Lindiwe Coyne—she's from Ottawa." Calvin's work with Canadian artists has earned him the highest of commendations. He explains that, "Yeah, one time Nardwuar said that he just wanted to thank me for all of Canada, cause he thought that K has worked with more Canadian bands than any other independent [US] label. And it never occurred to me that that was true, but I accepted his thanks for all of Canada. It was a nice thing to do." Other Canadian artists that Calvin likes a lot: well, I really like Carolyn Mark, I think she's great. Yeah...I want to have her come back here, that would be really neat. I love Julie Doiron, yeah, I listen to her Sub Pop record all of the time....I love that Sub Pop album. Yeah, she needs to come out here and play some shows too.

In keeping with his already prolific musical career, Calvin is currently working on several projects. The Beat Happening box set, *Crashing Through*, "well, it should be out in October...hopefully it will be." As well, Calvin is "working on a record with Dennis Driscoll and...did some recording with Wolf Colone!" that will be out some time this year. Dub Narcotic, which in the past has included performers like Lois, is recording this month, this time with Heather Dunn and Chris Sutton (of C.O.C.O.), "and, uh, yeah, that's about it."

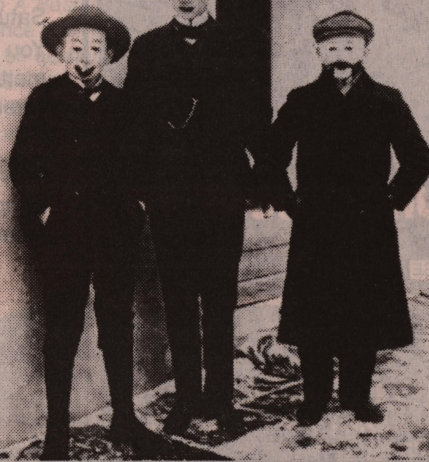
In case he ever runs out of things to do, Calvin has an excess of project possibilities in the wings. Calvin isn't doing any work on the Halo Benders at the moment because, "well, you know, Doug [Martsch] is really busy with Built to Spill, you know. So maybe later in the year we'll get together. It's all pretty casual."

In terms of touring, the only plans that Calvin has solidified for the summer is a tour with Mark Robinson "down to LA and stuff like that." Calvin adds that he "think[s] the Softies are playing some of the shows....Which will be really fun." When I ask him if the Beat Happening will be touring after the release of *Crashing Through*, he just says, "not that I'm aware." This gives me hope that Calvin will be playing numerous shows in a town near me—he just doesn't know about them yet.

DITCH RECORDS

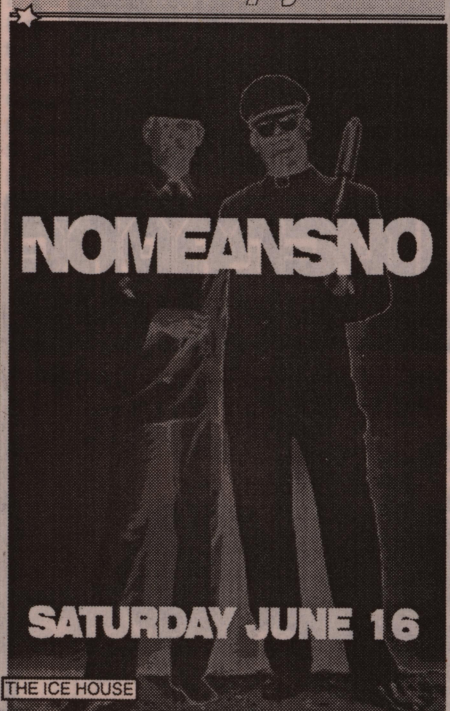
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CFUV Presents

Here's the music guide for the month of June. Don't miss these shows, they're not only good, they're grrrreat! Besides, what better things do you have to do? Surf the net?

Speaking of which, for the best up to date listings, just check out www.livevictoria.com.

Friday, June 1st @ The Icehouse: **The Planet Smashers, Subb and The Peacocks.**

Stomp recording artists the Planet Smashers will be "skanking" to the moon daylight.

Saturday, June 2nd @ The Icehouse: **Forgotten Rebels with Tricky Woo.**

One night you get ska the next you get punk rock. What more could young boys and girls ask for?

Thursday, June 7th @ Lucky Bar: **The Cash Brothers.**

Ex-members of the legendary Canadian group, The Skydiggers.

Friday, June 8th @ Lucky Bar: **Kinnie Starr with The Handsome Boyz 3.**

Atomique brings us the lovely Kinnie Starr to kick start the summer.

Saturday, June 9th @ The Icehouse: **Bob Log III, The Immortal Country Killers, DARTH Brooks.**

Remember those guys that played music by drumming on a Budweiser box, singing through a vacuum and playing a very twangy guy-tar. Those boys were **Doo Rag** and **Bob Log III** is one of those boys. Don't miss his new act; it's a shocker.

Friday, June 15th @ The Icehouse: **Freaky Flow with MC Flipside**

Well here's some hot DJ action for you during these dog-days of summer.

Saturday, June 16th @ The Icehouse: **No Means No.**

You always tell us we've sold out and stopped writing about the bands that matter. So here's your chance to sell out **No Means No** (their show, of course) when they play a rocking cd release party at the Icehouse.

Saturday, June 23rd @ Thursdays Pub: **Duotang** with guests.

Bring your daughter to the slaughter...Rob Slaughter of **Duotang** that is. Don't miss this duo spectacular.



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100 2001 The CFUV Chart

TM	LM	Artist	Title	Label
1	2*	The Metic	S/T	Self Released
2	-	Mogwai	Rock Action	Matador
3	-*	Vote Robot	In Meorm NA	Scratch
4	25*	The Tighties	Load "a"	Indy
5	-*	Snailhouse	A New Tradition 2001	Indie
6	14*	Destroyer	Streethawk a Seduction	Misra
7	-	Ani Difranco	Reveling	Rigteous Babe
8	-	Bardo Pond	Dilate	Matador
9	-	Mint	American Style	Planetary
10	-	Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds	No More Shall We...	Reprise
11	-	The Gourds	Bolsa De Agua	Munich
12	-	US Maple	Acre Thrills	Drag City
13	-*+	Dixies Death Pool	Soon...	Indie
14	-*	Mean Red Spiders	Stars And Sons	Teenage USA
15	-*	Piggy	Love Letters To Halifax	Indie
16	-	The Incredible Moses Leroy	Electric Pocket Radio	Ultimatum
17	-	Boards Of Canada	In A Beautiful Place	Warp
18	-*	Veda Hille	Field Study	Festival
19	-	Aki Tsuyuko	Ongakushitsu	Moikai
20	-	H20	GO	MCA
21	-	Techno Animal	Dead Man's Curse	Matador
22	-	Low + Dirty Three	S/T	Konkurrent
23	-	Various	Behind A Thatched Divider	Dainty Death
24	-	Monstre	Sucre 3	Alien 8
25	-*	Various	Snow Robots	Suction
26	26	Mice Parade	Mokoondi	Bubble Core
27	-	Shuggie Otis	Inspiration Information	Luaka Bop
28	3	Nobukazu Takemura	Hoshi No Koe	Thrill Jockey
29	-*	Novillero	The Brindleford Files	Endearing
30	11	Sylk 130	Re-Members Only	Six Degrees

Chart Compiled by Music Director Lindsay Cooper.

Ranking is based on weekly airplay charts for CFUV FM 101.9

(* Denotes Canadian artists. + Denotes local artists. RE Denotes re-entry)

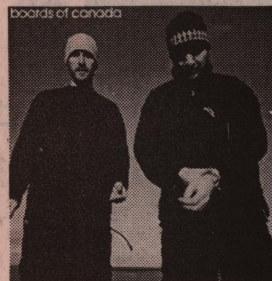
Chart Feature

Boards of Canada

In A Beautiful Place Out In The Country
Warp

I know I'm always writing about beautiful music but why else would I bother to write? *In A Beautiful Place Out In the Country* is Michael Sandison and Marcus Eoin's latest EP, after waiting two years since their first full length, *Music Has a Right To Children*. This EP teases you with anticipation for a full length. A bit quieter than their first album it still holds all the beauty and fascination that their music has. As on *Music Has a Right To Children*, they continue on with amazing production, weaving both musical and ambient sounds, tantalizing your ear canals with sounds opening, closing, and moving in layers. Quiet with soft rhythms, you could either go to sleep with the album on or have a gentle morning waking. Even this short 24 minute EP can be delved into, like swimming in warm, clear blue saltwater, full of sensory stimuli but never overwhelming.

-Zeta



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Dialtales

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Program Schedule: June '01

Program Highlights

Brand Spanking New!

Science Bytes: Science show! ad! ...with Margaret Milne, ernating Fri. 12-12:30 pm

Prean Music World: Korean mmunity show, Tue. 4-5 pm

Minor's Revenge: Punky eakfast cereal for you to chew ng with Gabe and Kiel, Sat. 6-am.

he No-Show: Fri. 12-1:30 am, en format.

On the moving rampage

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
6 ZIG ZAG OPEN FORMAT	SONIC CAFE OPEN FORMAT	WAKE THE DEAD OPEN FORMAT	UNCLE BRI'S EARLY AM FUNHOUSE WACKY	EXTRA FINE GRIND OPEN FORMAT	MINOR'S REVENGE PUNK	TBA
7						7
8 BLUE MONDAY FOLK	ODE TO ANI FOLK	ROOTOPIA/ SHARON'S SUNSHINE BREAKFAST FOLK	ACOUSTIC CREEK/ ECLECTIC FOLK FOLK	UNIVERSAL DONOR WORLD ROOTS	PORTUGUESE POSTCARDS PORTUGUESE	VOICE ETHIOPIA
9						8
10 MUSIC ON MONDAY CLASSICAL	JUST SAY NONO 20TH CENTURY	REWARDING RECORDINGS CLASSICAL	MUSIC THROUGH THE CENTURIES CLASSICAL	AMADEUS... & MORE CLASSICAL	SOITELLAAN FINNISH	POLISH
11						10
12 PROFIT? NOT! PUBLIC AFFAIRS	TAP INTO THE STREETS	STIR FRY/ RADIO FREE PIRG PUBLIC AFFAIRS	WINGS NEWS THRIFT STORE MUSIC	SCIENCE BYTES/ WE ARE THE... IN A RADIO/ WHO'S STREETS?	IRISH	ITALIAN BROADCASTING SYSTEM
1	THIS WAY OUT MAKING CON-TACT	CHINA MIKE'S SWAMP JAZZ CULTURAL HOUR	THE BACK PORCH EMO ROCK	ARTLET ARTS MAGAZINE	THE GREEK HOUR	POSTALES MUSICALES LATIN
2 SCANDINAVIAN HOUR	ZARA BIZARRA'S SOUND WORLD OPEN FORMAT	BOOSTER SHOT INDIE/OPEN	FOREVER YOUNG SENIORS	UNRESERVED NATIVE	SOUNDS OF SCOTLAND	GUITAR JAZZ JAZZ
3 LOUD, FAST & OUT OF CONTROL ROCKABILLY/R&B	SMOKER'S COUGH OPEN FORMAT	BYE-BYE BUTTERFLY, HELLO KITTY OPEN FORMAT	FISTS OF CURRY OPEN	PMS SHOW/ THE MANSION PUNK	SKANKSTER'S PARADISE S&A	DISCIPLES OF DR. DEMENTO METAL
4 TBA	KOREAN MUSIC WORLD		SURFIN' HI-FI		HILLBILLY HEAVEN COUNTRY	4

Who's Streets? Our Streets:
Alt. Fri, 12:30-1 pm
Electric Dialectics: Sat. 9-10 pm

Fare thee well...

Stellar Regions
Mars Bombers
Heavy Breathing
Boom Shak Attack



Aloha Dean Schwind!
Here's some little known facts
about the Deanster.

Why is music important to you?
Music is life, it makes you happy, horny and
sweaty.

What makes you go "RADICAL!"

Nice waves, empty beach.

3 Things you're wishing for right now?

Nice waves, empty beach.

National U.S. tour for my band (Little Big Man)

A slice of Ali Baba Veggie pizza.

If you were an animal, what would you be?

A raven.

How 'bout a tree?

A willow.

Tea or coffee?

Green tea.

What instruments do you play?

Drums, guitar and percussion.

Funniest band story?

Playing with Nardwuar in Nanaimo.

What 3 things do you need on a desert island?

A fatty, a beautiful woman, my surf board.

How 'bout that Canadian music scene?

It's got no balls, it is a eunuch!

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Nice waves, empty beach.

See you in the tube Dean!

5	GUERRILLA RADIO PUBLICAFFAIRS	PLANET FOLK WORLD	WOMEN ON AIR WOMEN'S ISSUES	BLACK & TAN FANTASY AFRICAN-AMERICAN	SOUNDCHECK SKA/SURF/PUNK	FRENCH	MAH HADASHI! JEWISH MUSIC	5
6	MILE STONES/ BITCHES BREW JAZZ	FREEFORM AND FUNCTION IMPROV & AVANT-GARDE	STRAIGHT, NO CHASER JAZZ	ROOTDOWN FUSION JAZZ GROOVE	SEARCHIN'/ ECLECTIC JAZZ SHOW JAZZ	RING MODU- LATIONS CLASSICAL	FOLKIN' AROUND FOLK	6
7				OUTSIDE LOOKING IN JAZZ		ALIVE & DREAD REGGAE	IN THE MOOD JAZZ	7
8	GIRLS NIGHT IN/ TOKEN ZONE QUEER WOMEN/ WOMEN OF COLOUR	BOOKLIT QUEERLY CANA- DIAN	LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL RHYTHM & BLUES	HEAD FULL OF FLAMES /alt	SAD & BEAUTIFUL WORLD SPOKEN WORD PERFORMANCE			8
9	THE BIG- BROADCAST WOMEN IN MUSIC	MOVIE TRAX SOUNDTRACKS & SCORES	FRANCO MAGAZINE FRENCH	SOMA AND CHARM OPEN	THINKING MAN'S SES- SION HIP HOP	ELECTRIC DIALECTICS ELECTRONICA	SOLUTIONS PUBLIC AFFAIRS	9
10		SONGS FOR THE MISUN- DERSTOOD/ EVENING @ Z-MAN'S OPEN	RE-MIXIT REMIXES/ OPEN	AREA OF REFUGE/ SOUNDS OF SKUNK PUNK	ESCAPE VELOCITY TECHNO	SUB ZERO HIP HOP	THE FISH SHOW OPEN FORMAT	10
11	VICTORIA'S CHINESE RADIO CHINESE							11
12		TRIBALIFE HOUSE/ TECHNO	TBA	ENERGY FLASH ELECTRONIC DANCE	THE NO-SHOW OPEN FORMAT	GARAGE GROOVES GARAGE ROCK		12
1	JIMMY TWILIGHT'S LONESOME LOUNGE					LONGHAIR'S JUKEBOX OPEN FORMAT	TBA	1
2	OPEN							2
3								3
4	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	FIVE RINGS OF SPUN FUN OPEN FORMAT OPEN	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	GUMBO OPEN FORMAT OPEN	4
5			THE FINAL HOURS OF WEDNESDAY NIGHT SPOKEN WORD					5

SPOKEN WORD

North of America



By Danielle Prokop

With a sound both urgent and effervescent, North of America display a kinetic aural force on stage and in their studio recordings—but according to the band that wasn't always the case. The foursome from Halifax, have a few more years notched on their belt since their second release on Matlock Records, *These Songs are Cursed* (1998). Their latest two albums, *The Sepultura* (2000) (independently released) and *This is Dance Floor Numerology* (2001) on Progeria Records have brought the band into a ripeness that leaves them confident and content. In comparison to their earlier releases, *This is Dance Floor Numerology* harbors a more intense edgy feel: the vocals are more aggressive, and the fundamental structure is complex with progressive math elements underlying. According to Michael Catano and Mark Colavecchia, the band as a whole feel they've matured musically since 1998, and listeners might be surprised (and hopefully delighted) with their latest efforts.

"If someone's only exposure to our band was *These Songs are Cursed* and they came to see us now, I think that it would be a lot different than they'd expect," says Catano in regards to the their new album and tour. "I think that with our new record we tried to make songs that we would enjoy playing live and would maybe capture some of the energy live. We don't even play a lot of songs from *These Songs are Cursed* anymore. Myself, and all of us in the band are a million times happier with *The Sepultura* and *This is Dance Floor Numerology*. It was weird because we were a band that sounded completely unlike any band that any of us would listen to. Now I think we're starting to sound more like a band we would like if we weren't in that band. I think that's the point we're at now, and definitely it's a lot more fun to play these songs live."

Not only are North of America pleased with *This is Dance Floor Numerology* but also with the way the band functions as a group. Members are not confined to specific instruments, and there is no individual songwriter. The band's collective effort is apparent by their live performances, with all members taking turns on vocals and constantly switching instruments.

"I'm so psyched about the way our band operates," Catano enthuses. "And everyone's contribution is so obvious; whereas before it was like one person would write a song and bring it in, and the way it was written would demand what you'd play. The communication that goes along in the practice space is a lot more focused."

"We write songs more as a band now than when we ever did," Agrees Colavecchia, emphasizing their desire to direct their energy as a team.

Along with the change in structure and sound for the new album came the decision to release it on Progeria rather than Matlock Records.

"Basically we wanted to make a record that would be distributed well in the U.S. and we wanted to make a good record with someone who wasn't myself," Catano states about the resolution to switch record labels. "We got hooked up with this guy Juan Louis Carrera who runs a label out of D.C. called Slowdown Records and has recorded amazing sounding records for bands like Faraquet and the Make-Up. It's not really a matter of leaving Matlock..."

"...It's more like we wanted to record with someone in an environment where we could make a record that would sound like something we've never done before," Colavecchia adds in.

North of America's intricately driven rock seems to exemplify a thankfully growing brand of intelligent indie-rock, hitherto scarce among the lonely pines of the great white North.

"It seems to me that maybe rock music is making some sort of come back," reflects Colavecchia, and Catano's hope for the Canadian rock scene is high.

"When I think of Canada and rock music now, three of my favourite bands are Canadian: The Red Light Sting from Vancouver, Rockets Red Glare from Toronto, and The Constantines from Guelph are all as good as any band making records today. Weights and Measures, Kepler, Snailhouse, it's crazy, there are so many good bands... and if those are the only ones we know about there's got to be tons more out there!"

Duotang
June 23
 @ Thursdays Pub
 with guests TBA

New album "The Bright Side" in stores June 5th



By Randy Gelling

After a 50 year existence, there can be little doubt that these are the last days of rock n' roll; commercially if not aesthetically. At the same time, it's often during a musical form's last moments that it achieves its full potential.

The psych-sludge of Bardo Pond reflects the artistic freedoms (and financial limitations) available to musicians who work largely outside of the constraints of the marketplace.

The band's sound is equal parts garage fuzz, punk dissonance, and slow, stoner-heavy rhythms. Above it all floats Isobel Sollenberger's blissful and/or wasted vocals. But the intuitive musical structures of early psychedelic rock and free jazz is their defining characteristic.

"When we began we were really into free jazz," says guitarist Michael Gibbons, "especially the New York players in the 80's and the No-Wave movement. So we had this completely improv-oriented experience and then the Velvet Underground and the German bands like Can were an influence, as well as Indian music and pure rock music."

Since the early eighties most American underground-rock groups have made a strategic retreat back into the music's past to explore a pre-maturely abandoned branch of the music. In Bardo Pond's case this is the mish-mash of rock and free jazz known as psychedelic rock. Psych's early promise of a full fledged avant-rock hybrid was betrayed by the initial innovators submission to the marketplace (Pink Floyd minus Barrett, Jefferson Airplane = Starship) or lapsing back to their respectable folk roots (the Dead). Posthumously, the German groups Gibbon mentions above (including Faust, Neu!, etc.) refined and pushed the music in ways that were to become tremendously influential. Bardo Pond reconnects back to this early wave of psych most clearly not through sound, but through a shared musical process.

"When we play you just get lost in the sonic adventure," says Gibbons. "I listen to my playing sometimes and get kinda critical but really the ability to make an interesting sound far outweighs the ability to run down some scale. But at the same time it's good to be able to hit a note straight and clear and pure."

The danger here, of course, is endless pointless jamming. But anyone willing to take the time to really listen can distinguish between truly expressive playing and mere wanking.

"It's just like when you listen," agrees Gibbons. "When it's there you know it's going on and when it's not you just want to turn it off. When you're jamming with people and it's working it's just like, 'Fuckin' Eh!'."

The glib dismissal of psychedelic rock as simply "music to take drugs to" (in the words of Spacemen 3) does contain some truth as Bardo Pond often obscurely reference

psychedelics through their album titles:

Amanita, *Set And Setting*, and their latest *Dilate*. Or sometimes, as in the case of Hash Jar Tempo—their collaboration with New Zealand guitarist Roy Montgomery—their references can be far from obscure.

"We tried to pick the drugs that could open you up, almost as a metaphor for a religious experience," says Gibbons. "We

Bardo Pond Despite the Roar

aren't trying to recreate a drug experience for the audience, it's more about how music can be a kind of transporting agent; something that changes your perception of life. That's what the music I enjoy listening to does to me so I guess indirectly that's one of our goals when we play."

The band's fortunes have been steadily improving to the point where they were able to purchase a home studio for recording last year. Many underground bands have been taking advantage of the increasingly cheaper home recording technology to craft and control their music more thoroughly. As a result, instead of the self-indulgence some may fear, Bardo Pond's latest album *Dilate* is their most coherent, wide-ranging and beautiful album to date. Most of the band's members still work day jobs, however, and the possibilities of undiluted rock n' roll breaking into the mainstream is not something Gibbons is particularly optimistic about.

"Rock is definitely laying low. I can't ever see it going the way of jazz, that would be a crying shame, especially good jazz. But I can see how you can compare the two. There are a lot of great bands, there's lots of great jazz, but it's hard to find, you gotta really want to find it. It's fucked."

Bardo Pond will be playing with Mogwai on Wednesday, June 06 in Vancouver at Richards on Richards.

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NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA: a CHRYsalis

By Geraldine Bulosan

A few weeks before the phone interview with Nobukazu Takemura, I'm trying to think of questions to ask about his music. His previous album, *Scope*, first introduced me to his electronic blips, shards and clicks intricately built up into aural/geometric shapes. Some of his music is also reminiscent of classic electro-acoustic music: sparse, oscillating notes shimmering like the fractures in a sheet of ice or shafts of light wavering through the branches of a blossoming tree; and seemingly repetitive loops are countered by bird-like notes dancing in and around the rhythms. I forget that I'm trying to think of questions; instead I'm easing into the opening melody of "One Day" from his latest release on Thrill Jockey, *Hoshi No Koe* ("notes from a starry sky") which evokes for me the idea of rearranging the sky, of somehow capturing the light it sheds and transforming it into sound. I watch dust particles swirl through the sunlight in my room, small glints turn and disappear.

Takemura's background as a hip-hop/electro DJ shows through in his rhythmical invention: similar to using a turntable to create music, he uses the computer to create and manipulate sounds. As exacting and robotic as one would assume of computer-created music, a lot of Takemura's songs are surprisingly warm and organic sounding. He attributes this to his use of a randomizing computer program (of his own creation) and just messing around with the equipment to see what comes out and improvising upon that. A few of the songs are also created using only a keyboard, strings, vibes or a xylophone without much digital manipulation.

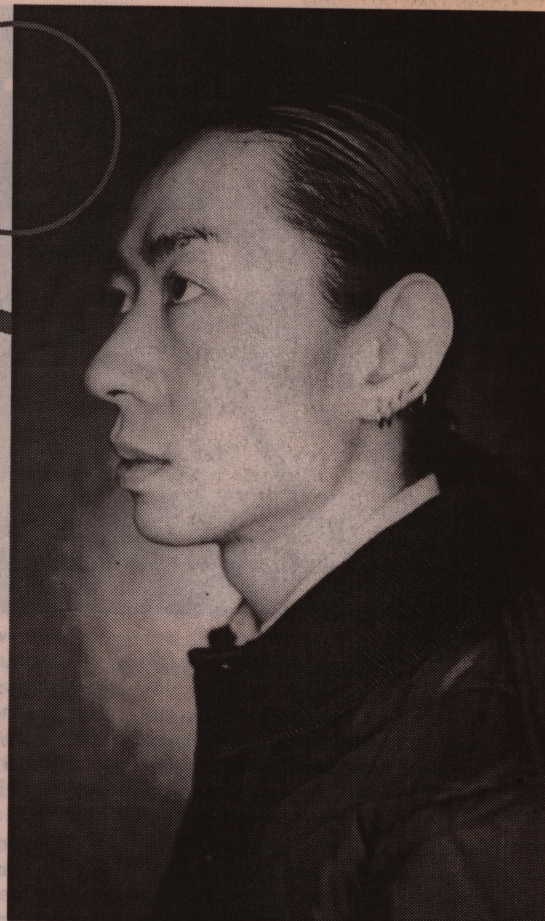
"Hip-hop was never just a genre to me, it was the whole idea of breaking down boundaries," Takemura said in an interview with the Chicago Reader. One of his early musical collaborations was in 1989 as a part of the avant hip-hop trio Audio Sports with Yamatsuka Eye of the Boredoms. As one of his main foundations, Takemura's hip-hop roots are particularly evident on *Hoshi No Koe* in the song "Sign," a chill and funky tune for robots, which at first may take you aback due to the vocoder vocals, early electro feel and lack of heavy bass but the rhythms are unmistakably fragmented hip-hop.

After Audio Sports, Takemura produced, played and composed music for the electric-jazz, ten-piece group, Spiritual Vibes, which may seem like a leap from his DJ days but he feels free-jazz, hip-hop and noise all have something in common. His first solo album was under the moniker Child's View, an acid-jazz project which shifted gears by the time the second album, *Child & Magic*, came out, making use of both live and electronic instrumentation, minimal sparkly melodies and drum n' bass.

When I asked if he also incorporates errors into his music, à la Brain Eno, he responded through his translator that "I prefer the parts with the bugs in it; that if a 'mistake' sounds good then I'll use it." The randomizing program allows him to create unusual sounds and structures in order to draw attention to "the sense of unexpectedness."

A long time listener of Takemura and now musical cohort, Aki Tsuyuko appears on most of his albums including *Hoshi No Koe*. Tsuyuko's own music is predominantly played on organ or keyboard and, for me, is most memorable and represented by the song "Dreamy Fish" from her first album, *Ongakushitsu*, with its gently ebbing melody like some forgotten merry-go-round tune. Her work has a similar tone to Takemura's, which is possibly due to the fact that he taught her how to play various instruments. *Ongakushitsu* was produced by Takemura on his label, Childisc, and is on Jim O'Rourke's label, Mokai, for North American distribution through Drag City.

In addition to *Hoshi No Koe*, Takemura already has another album, *Sign*, due to be released sometime this June. *Sign* includes a short animated film by Moshino of Girl Studio (which will also be released separately as a book and video in Japan) and collaborations with John McEntire, Bundy K. Brown and Douglas McCombs (all of Tortoise, Directions in Music and Brokeback fame). The musical collaborations were created by Takemura



playing a rough mix of his idea for the others and having them play along with it, he then took the recordings back home to Osaka, Japan to be processed.

"We have respect for each other's music and there's a good relationship going on," Takemura says. While he enjoys the collaborations with other artists, he says that he doesn't currently listen to other musicians and doesn't really feel other artists have had any influence on his music, except for the European surrealist films of the 1920s: equally gorgeous and reflective in his use of the minimal and the unusual in terms of construction and texture. He also mentioned that he would like to do some non-musical computer programming and will be spending some time this year producing Aki Tsuyuko's second album.

The set up for this interview was a little unusual: since I don't speak Japanese, and Takemura doesn't speak English, I spoke to him through his translator, Takesh, who seemed unsure at times of the answers he translated back to me, even though, really, what answers can be expected from any musician?

Nobukazu Takemura will be playing with Tortoise at the Vogue Theatre, June 2nd in Vancouver.



Lowest of the Low and the Weakerthans @ Vertigo, May 10.

To be honest I'd never heard the Weakerthans before this show and thanks to BC Transit I only got to hear about three songs, but three good songs. At first I was surprised at the large crowd of hipsters and black studded belt wearers, but after listening to the slightly melancholic lyrics sung in almost lullaby sweetness it was apparent why they were there. The next time I'm on Napster I'll be looking for some tracks, but only to preview. Buy their albums, support small bands.

However, once the Weakerthans finished, the hippiness left Vertigo. Every last one cleared out. Leaving a tiny crowd for The Lowest of the Low, who didn't seem to mind. Even though they played the chords the way they were written, they put energy into their show and made up for the lack of people. The only complaints I had was that the harmonica was overwhelmed by the guitar, taking some of the tenderness out of songs such as "Subversives" and that "Black Monday" didn't make the set list. If you missed the show you can throw their disc into your cd player, turn up the volume three or four notches, drink some beer and get a rough idea.

- Jeremy Miller

The Supersuckers @ The Icehouse April 2nd.

The Supersuckers played a show in Seattle and I was there. Some guy in front kept touching Eddie Spaghetti's bass. The music stopped and Eddie made it clear that the next person that touched his bass would get kicked in the head. Everyone hears punk rockers making threats like this, but the next time Eddie's bass got tagged, Eddie kicked the guy. Honest. Pure. Simple. These are the qualities that attracted us to punk rock. The fact that the four of us, or any other bunch of like-minded jackasses for that matter, could get up on stage and just rock out is immeasurably appealing.

SHOW REVIEWS

These are the attitudes that were showed by the Supersuckers when they played their country set at the Icehouse on April 2nd. The opening band played a solid set of good ol' boy country showing that country isn't about twang or Shania, but old fashioned rock with a working man's perspective. To begin their set The Supersuckers played ante poker on stage creating an air of authenticity. It was almost possible to believe that the Icehouse was a trucker's bar somewhere near Montana. The night even ended with the band getting pelted with beer bottles and a near brawl after Eddie kicked an offending drunk and drummer Dancing Eagle jumped into the crowd.

Even though Eddie started off by stating that they know they're not a country band, they performed well and rocked through their set list playing tracks mostly off their release *Must've been high*. Missing from the list was "Non-Addictive Marijuana" the closest the album comes to having a made to be liked track and "Hung-Over Together". I didn't miss "Non-Addictive Marijuana" the album has far better tracks and "Hung-Over Together", a duet about getting drunk with your woman, can't be performed with out Kelly Deal.

Overall the show was strong with tight playing and



photos by Jerney Miller

interesting banter, including the intermission when the band played a second round of poker. The only poor performance came from a few drunks who jumped on stage and threw beer bottles. But isn't that what punk and country are all about?

-Jeremy Miller

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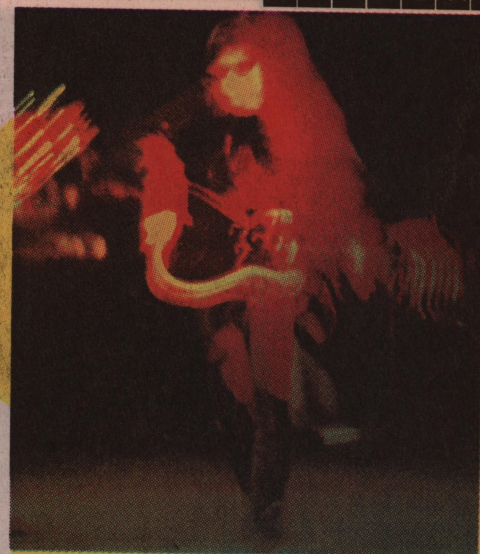
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Good MORN- ING Keiji Haino



by Adam Jones

"In music the passions enjoy themselves." - Friedrich Nietzsche

Black on black on black. Blue spotlights glint off Haino's sunglasses, and off his black leather boots as he plugs his black guitar into a sequence of five or six pedals. A drum kit sits behind him. He tunes slowly, string by string, as the audience collectively leans forward with childlike anticipation. Then...

Reescchhesssswanngg! Haino's fingers move up and down his guitar neck like spiders on speed /faster/ - /faster/ tearing notes out of his guitar, out of the air, out of your head... he seems to be assaulting his guitar, ripping it while wrenching away all barriers between his music and his audience. Dark noise and dissonant barks in Japanese that sound like nails on a chalkboard. His slight figure shakes in his chair, black heels kicking various pedals on/off as he wrenches his way through a lengthy riff. Then soft small notes accented by his grating vocals, segueing into a chaotic noisy blues riff, which I find out later is Keiji's personal arrangement of a Blind Lemon Jefferson tune. "Sound guides me through everything I want to do in a performance" he says. "I want to listen to the music and watch the performance at the same time, integrate sound and movement - see the sound as movement. Music is all motion, and body movements... I need a new verb to describe what I mean."

Keiji Haino is a living guitar legend, renown in underground circles internationally. He has released dozens of albums on dozens of labels, including a few on Montreal's Alien 8 Recordings. He's collaborated with notables like Peter Brotzmann, John Zorn, Faust, Mayo Thompson, High Rise, Derek Bailey and Loren MazzaCane Connors. I'd read about Haino's mystery, especially his quixotic vagueness in interviews. When asking Haino what he most wants to express as an artist he insisted I listen to the music, and finished with one of Buddha's aphorisms: "You have to understand that nothing is everything."

Keiji desires to transcend classification, and resists attempts to pinpoint his influences or attempts to put his music in a specific genre. "I don't want to be called noise, or psychedelic, or avant-garde, or improvisation or rock or blues. I just want to be a musician who plays music. Haino is Haino. Though if I'm somewhere, like a café or something with my guitar, and people ask what I play, I just say I'm a blues musician. Otherwise, it's just too hard to explain. Music is primarily spiritual, the instruments are just there to provide control over the sound."

Haino is a fan of the blues, listing John Lee Hooker, Blind Willie Johnson, and Blind Lemon Jefferson as influences. He hasn't seen any blues greats perform, "all the blues guys I like are either dead or

they have become audience pleasers." He was also quick to speak up on other genres: "I hate free jazz. Ornette Coleman owes everything he did to Charlie Parker. I don't like synthesizers and samplers either. But I like some electronic music like Iannis Xenakis."

After Haino's guitar performance, and without an intermission, he went into a percussion 'set'. I hesitate to use the word set here, as this aspect was about as far away from a traditional music set as one can conceive. Keiji cleared away a large section of the floor, and then took a small blow dryer to two tambourines, tightening the skins for what we were about to see. He picked up the tambourines and slowly, lightly traced patterns on the floor. Light soft sounds, then he started beating the tambourines down on the hardwood. Then /faster/ /faster/ /faster/ until he was bashing the tambourines down on the floor and his body a shaman tugged through a spirit quest by his own sounds. Cymbals began flying off his tambourines, he did not hesitate, just continued following the sounds and beating away his own rhythm until the music silenced itself.

Setting down the tambourines he picked up two hand cymbals, letting off low pings, then wild sweeps and bangs and bashes... CLANG! Then drowning out the cymbal on his body, before clashing and jumping and swaying again. "I want to play the whole spectrum, light and dark, loud and soft." Then to the drum kit with light taps and furious sequences of coordinated attack and then he left us with a final bow. Edgy noise performance or a shamanic journey... no one in the audience could say for sure. "I dress in black, because if I shaved my head and wore white robes it would be too close to what I actually do."

The first time Haino went to North America, New York to be specific, he was 40 years old. He doesn't feel the West has had too large an influence on him or his music. "My generation grew up after World War II, and got the image that we were born on the losing side, so a lot of people in Japan have a western complex, and forget our own history." Haino likes visiting Canada, "as everything's so big and open, I can see the sky without having anything in my peripheral vision."

It was near midnight and time to end the interview. In an effort to be suave, and out of genuine gratitude, I sought to introduce myself and say thanks - in Japanese. A quick "Watashi wa Adam Jones des. Ohaiyo gozaimasu." He shook my hand and laughed, I assumed in amusement, and I proceeded to leave the room casually chatting with one of translators. A few minutes later she asked me if I was joking with what I had said. I said no. I was then politely informed that my parting words to Keiji Haino were: "My name is Adam Jones. Good morning." Woe is me.

The Flashing Lights:



Penetrating hard rock on a sugar buzz

by Leanne Dunic
photo by Leanne Dunic

Two years after the release of their first full length album, *Where The Change Is*, Toronto based band The Flashing Lights played at Legends in support of their latest CD, *Sweet Release*.

We commenced an interview at sunset, over gigantic ice cream desserts, on the roof of a nameless building downtown. The title *Sweet Release* is a reflection of their influences for this particular album. Lead singer/guitarist Matt Murphy commented that "the title *Sweet Release* was intended to be pretty ambiguous, so that people could take what they wanted from it." However, it also refers to the band's prime influence by 70s rockers, Sweet. Sweet's tendency to double up on a singular monosyllabic word (such as their hit in '71, "Funny Funny", "Coco", and even The Archies' "Sugar Sugar"), was an element of inspiration for the second track of *Sweet Release*, called the "Same Thing Twice".

Sweet Release was also a reference to the "release of creative ideas that we had," commented Gaven Dianda, keyboard/tambourine player extra ordinaire. Matt described the recording process parallel to a colouring book. "It started like little sketches, then everyone grabbed a different pencil, and made it into what it was."

"And then someone coloured out of the lines, and kinda messed up the picture and we tore out a page," added bass player Henri Sangalang.

"But then we would leave it sometimes," continued Matt. "We let things go out of the margins. If we liked a mistake, we kept it, and everything would work towards it."

All members of the Flashing Lights are greatly influenced by The Who. Drummer Stephen Pitkin learned how to play the drums from the Who song "You Better You Bet" (which, incidentally, Matt hates the drumming on). They have been working on an informal tribute to the Who album *Sellout*, with bands like the Heavy Blinkers. Matt says that *Sweet Release* is similar to that album "in the way that the songs are all different, and that the band takes different angles to the songs—it's

not all the same beats per measure—it's a little more comfortable with itself."

Unlike *Where The Change Is*, for *Sweet Release*, "we had more time to contemplate our own brilliance or error," mentioned Matt.

Before the Flashing Lights, Matt fronted the group known as The Superfriendz. On the side, Matt and Henri played in a 60s tribute band, which was mostly material by bands like The Yardbirds, The Kinks, The Zombies and The Who "It was at the tail end of The Superfriendz, and I really liked the way the other band sounded," described Matt. "It also reminded me of some of the good things about 60s rock, in terms of reaching the audience and the things you do to draw people into the music. For example, things as simple as hand claps, and shout outs and getting people to sing along. Music isn't just about playing music for someone else. It's about trying to get them to take part in it as well. That is a more valuable enterprise."

Henri also appreciates good live potential as an important ingredient in quality songwriting. He also commented that if "a song that is so profound and so passionate that someone wants to listen to it with headphones on to see if it's even better—that is a good song." The Flashing Lights have earned a reputation for their fun and strong live shows—specifically their ability to successfully involve the audience with their music. There

have been shows in the past involving gorillas (which consequently left mashed bananas in Matt's guitar strings), the band in make up, and guitar smashing in Vancouver, but the show's main focus is always the music. I have never seen someone with cooler moves on stage than Gaven and his tambourine, which is reason enough to see the Flashing Lights live.

For the last few years, The Flashing Lights received a lot of coverage on Much Music's recently cancelled program Much East. However, the Flashing Lights are confident that they will still receive substantial publicity on "Going Costal" [the hour replacement for Much East/West].

The fact that these programs were cancelled due to poor ratings, is a prime example of the direction of interest among the younger Canadian demographic. Gaven stated, "If canceling Much East and Much West means more Brittany Spears, so be it!"

When asked to describe *Sweet Release*, Gaven compared it to the sundae that they were devouring: "it's like this sundae — it's got a hard shell of hard rock, and once you penetrate it, the delights that are inside, are untold. Sweet creamy filling, and layers of delicious fruit . . . and hard chunks of fudge and chocolate that substantiate the elemental energy of music itself. Basically, it is disgustingly good, and good for you too, so I've heard."

As Gaven said, The Flashing Lights are "a good sugar rush, followed by some crispy hard rock candy, some healthy fruit filling, and a nice cherry on top."

FRIDAY, JUNE 29TH, 2001

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REVIEWS

Third Eye Foundation*I Poopoo On Your Juju*
Merge

The new Third Eye Foundation album brings a bit of grief, not that the music alone doesn't also evoke a certain melancholy, but this is possibly the final offering as Matt Elliott moves on to fatherhood, among other things. *I Poopoo On Your Juju* is a collection of early remixes including "Tarwater," a Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers cover, plus a new remix of Blonde Redhead. As always, the music is hauntingly gorgeous and mournful. Most of the musicians featured on this album are not familiar to me but that has never been a deterrent, rather it introduces me to other musicians. Some of my initial favourites on first hearing *I Poopoo* were "La Dispute," by minimalist French composer, Yann Tiersen, for its stark piano loops and distinctive vocal refrain from "Lost" on his previous album, *Little Lost Soul*; the dub infected "Snuffed Candles" by Urchin, and Blonde Redhead's "Four Damaged Lemons." Upon further listening the whole album became my favourite and I mourn the (hopefully temporary) musical loss of this musician.

-g-jubey jube

**Fantastic Plastic Machine***Beautiful*
Emperor Norton

Beautiful is the third full-length release from Fantastic Plastic Machine, a.k.a. Tomoyuki Tanaka, who composed, produced and performed all of the original tracks on the album. As with 1999's *Luxury*, this album is a carefully crafted exploration of a musical style and the culture associated with it. This exploration worked well on *Luxury*, where the album art and lounge-inspired music evoked numerous

images of the lounge era, from kitschy artwork to vinyl ottomans. Tanaka's latest release affects a '70s disco feel, but lacks the inspired, and satirical aspects of *Luxury*. Any single song on this album does embody and examine the decadence and self-absorption of the '70s club scene, but few of the songs on *Beautiful* offer anything original in terms of sound or lyrics. The 12 tracks on this album could easily have been reduced to 2 or 3, without altering its overall effect. Songs such as "Love is Psychedelic," and "God Save the Mona Lisa," are entertaining and enjoyable in isolation, but seem drab and repetitive when put in the context of the entire album. Perhaps Tanaka was being ironic in naming his latest effort *Beautiful*, while filling the album with monotonous tracks that continuously proclaim how splendid they are--that would seem a fitting critique of disco.

-Sara Young

Ani Difrancò*Revelling and Reckoning*
Righteous Babe

This double CD is fresh and buttered, directly off of Ani Difrancò's dinner table. As usual, she uses delicious lyrics and voluptuous sound to send politically and emotionally charged messages to her fans. *Revelling* is an upbeat mixture of funk-jazz and acoustic. The haunting horn, soft piano and fierce sax intermingle with Ani's vocals like Indian spices dancing upon your tongue. *Reckoning* is comparatively more mellow than previous albums, with a pinch of country twang--a perfect listen on a quiet, sunny day. Looking back on Ani Difrancò's earlier prolific compositions, there seems to be a shift in her awareness, opinions and emotions on this album. Love has become her most powerful tool, while anger and angst have diminished in use. Her politics remain potent, while they are seductively mingled with gentle riffs and lyrics. Those of you who are concerned about Ani's explorations into new domains of musical expression will be audibly fulfilled with this compilation. It has affinities with *To the Teeth*, with new innovative sound--still she quenches our craving for just her and her guitar.

-Leanna Boyer

Autechre*Confield*
Warp Records

There is an infinitely large cache of sounds available to musicians of today, thanks to electronics. Those artists who chose to use but the bare minimum of these manufactured sounds, create music that is simple and can be mesmerizing. Sean Booth and Rob Brown of Autechre (I'd like to settle all disputes regarding the pronunciation of the made-up band name. I have it on good authority that it is pronounced aw-TECH-er not oh-TECH-re.) are no such musicians--especially not on their latest release, *Confield*. They've packed into sixty-two minutes as many of these little sonic gems as is mechanically possible. And the result is breathtaking. Melodies are all but shed on this release. Perhaps this is the reason that Autechre fans were looking forward to the duo's most "experimental" album to date. Melodies take second seat to the clever electro-metallic percussive elements. They sweep in and out of aural view on tracks such as "Pen Experts" and "Bine" by manipulations as simple as volume control. For me, the first time through *Confield* was not an easy listening experience. It is music that will not mould itself to the listener, the listener must mould herself to the music.

-Louise Bradbury

**The Black Halos***The Violent Years*
Sub Pop

The Black Halos put the rock back in punk rock. Their much-anticipated second release, *The Violent Years*, takes their destructive aesthetics a step further. These proud Vancouver boys are moving up in the world, as *The Violent Years* is a full-fledged Sub Pop release, while their self-titled album is merely on Die Young. Stay Pretty--a Sub Pop subsidiary label. The Halos are often, and aptly,

compared to classic CBGB bands like The Deadboys, The Stooges and The New York Dolls (in fact, Halos frontman Billy Hopeless moonlights as a Johnny Thunders impersonator in Vancouver's premier Dolls cover band, The New West Dolls). While the Halos do justice to the sound and attitude laid out by their predecessors, they still manage to retain a character all their own. Hip swaggering, crunchy riffs are overlaid with Hopeless' rock and roll accent (somewhere in between Joey Ramone and Johnny Rotten with an ounce of Shane MacGowan) to create a fabulous rockin' sound. There is a certain amount of diversity involved too, such as the tribute to 50's rock and Roll, "Lost in the '90s," and the wonderful drooling ballad, "50 Bourbon Street". Finally, for all of you poor folks who haven't seen them live yet, just throw the disk in your CD-ROM and enjoy "Shooting Stars," (appropriately filmed at CBGB's). All in all, *The Violent Years* makes a perfect soundtrack for a Friday night of drunken rock and roll debauchery.

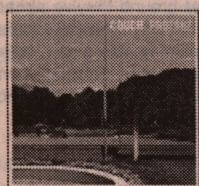
-Mark PaulHus

Buck65*Man Overboard*
Anticon

I guess the goal of any review is to somehow describe the feel, sound, or general genre of a given CD or artist. Let me first say that I will probably fail miserably in describing Halifax MC and super-producer Buck65's debut Anticon release. This album eludes any attempt to categorize. That's a pretty big reviewer's cliché, but in this case it is true. Buck65 is an amazing producer, he can scratch and he sure as hell can rap, but I don't think that he really wants to make 'hip-hop' per se--maybe he's too smart for that (take that for what it's worth). If you missed him when he was in town last month, you probably have no idea how amazing this guy is live--beat juggling, dancin' and rappin' all at the same time. Since I can't really describe this album, let it suffice to say that Buck65's work verges on hip-hop (mad) genius. Yet, unlike other mad geniuses, he is conscious of his quirky status. Parodying his own work he states, "I was a sideways baby, always will be, to start the party right you're probably going to have to kill me." I'm

along with Buck on this one, but maybe we should just kill the party instead. Unless you are a huge Anticon fan (Sole, Dose One etc.), I'm not exactly sure where *Man Overboard* might fit into your CD collection. His wrenching, often whimsical and self-defacing musical tour through subject matter such as the loss of his mother, his outcast status, and little league baseball may not be for everybody. But even if you're not into stretched, tweaked and thoughtful lyrics and beats, every collection needs an oddball. Why not make it one that you will actually listen to, unlike all of those Wesley Willis and Merzbow CDs collecting dust on your shelf.

-Tim Sedo



Couch
Profane
Matador Records/Chesterfield.

This album is mellow, happy, not quite sparkly, like eating candy on a sofa. Couch is a four piece German ensemble consisting of keyboards, drums, bass, and guitar. The feel evoked by the music is a decidedly electronic one, not only in ambience, but also in structure and rhythm. This repetitiveness, the largest downfall of most electronic music, is also a bit of a problem here. Couch falls into steady and similar rhythmic patterns and variations which don't hold up under the scrutiny of a careful listen. In other words, I wouldn't just sit back, close my eyes, and listen to couch in the way I might with Yo La Tengo or the Rheostatics *Group of Seven* piece, for example. But despite some repetition the music remains good and enjoyable. I would recommend Couch as good background music, walking music, or music to listen to while working. Through personal experience, I've found it to be helpful when writing essays on J.S. Mill's Utilitarianism. Divan.

-Adam Jones

Daft Punk
Discovery
Virgin

It's been a fair old length of time since Parisian duo Daft Punk unleashed, in the form of *Da Funk*, one of the great dance-floor anthems of the '90's. They followed that with the largely excellent LP, *Homework*, and co-Punk Thomas Bangalter had a massive hit under the pseudonym Stardust, "Music Sounds Better With You," but little else has been heard from them. France re-assumed its

mantle as, without doubt, the most useless country in the entire world when it comes to pop music...then this. Daft Punk adopt much the same approach as on their previous effort, but with an immediately more satisfying effect. Their trademark vocoder-isms are in evidence once more—occasionally leading to a worrying tendency to sound somewhat like the Buggles, but more often giving us a defiantly funky take on the somewhat tired, old dance-floor diva/soul brother wailings that infest so much dance music today. Slashes of treated electric guitar and clipped samples jump out from every nook and cranny, yet all the time the funk is there in huge, great dollops. It moves, it grooves, it smooches, and it's consistently fabulous, from the first song, and single, "One More Time," onwards. You just gotta dance, brothers and sisters!

-Matthew McDonnell

David Gray
White Ladder
BMG

David Gray has, in the past year or so, attained something approaching superstar status in the UK—his home country. This has been a relatively slow process—the fellow had churned out three albums to utter critical and commercial indifference before the release of *White Ladder* in late 1999. Even then, the album took a while to infect the national consciousness, but it has now, with a vengeance—over 500 000 copies sold is no mean feat for a chap who has been dropped by not one, but two labels already in his relatively short career. Despite this sweet story of success, it's pretty difficult to fathom why there's been this sudden surge of enthusiasm for Mr. Gray. This record is an utter non-event. He's a singer/songwriter, but his insipid, anodyne voice brings to mind more the protestations of an angst-ridden accountant confiding in his secretary than the confessional passion and lyrical touch that mark out great singer/songwriters. There's a couple of passable tunes on the CD, sure, but they're heavily outnumbered by dirges that just can't wait to pass you by. Incidentally, a cover of "Say Hello, Wave Goodbye" pops up as the last track, which may sound interesting. Let me assure you, it's not.

-Matthew McDonnell

Dianogah
Hannibal/A Bear Explains
Southern

This American math-rock trio originally recorded the two songs on this 7-inch as part of their second album. Ultimately, these songs were left off the album and were released

to coincide with their first European tour. The A-side is a charming, technical pop/rock piece about life in a small town in Missouri. On the B-side, Dianogah tones up the math without compromising any hooks, while a bear hilariously explains the correct and incorrect ways to put on various items of clothing. The cover art looks nice, the marble vinyl is a smooth touch, and both songs are great for the ear (without constituting ear candy). Each song's effectiveness and authenticity make me wonder why anyone would leave them off an album. It smells like a mistake. However, I am glad these songs were released because they make life taste like a fresh loaf of bread.

-Nicolas Frenette

A Luna Red
The Death Birds
Global Symphonic

Depressing music from Vancouver is the best. *The Death Birds* is one of my personal winners of the year, in all of its frustrated, gory bleakness. Combining elements of punk and industrial with a retro new wave (can that be right?) feel, this CD appears to take its well-picked influence from musical subgenres of the early eighties, and combines them beautifully. While some might find *The Death Birds* a tad depressing, I found the wavering between angry frustration and a defeatist attitude oddly comforting. Synthesizers, drum machines and hypnotic electric bass lines, overlaid with the haunting voice of Erica Neumann on songs like the title track and "Radiation," put this CD in my 'play it to death' category. Enough attention was paid to the transitions between the songs to make it a compelling listen, and the frequent onslaught of angst is broken with spells of enchanting and rhythmic soundscapes to balance out the emotion of the CD. In short, it's great music for people who wear a lot of black to listen to while mulling over the fate of humanity. While A Luna Red could be accused of taking themselves a bit too seriously, (believe me, I'm a hypocrite to be pointing that finger) anyone who is a fan of anything quasi-industrial that doesn't outright suck will probably give this a solid score.

-jennym

Jumpin' Jack Frost
Fine Tuning Volume One
Dune Recordings

One must be able to appreciate the feel of hard and funky drum and bass to recognize the potency of this album; for those who don't yet appreciate it, welcome to the massive

world of drum and bass. Jumpin' Jack Frost mixes a flawless fusion of hard-edged and jazzy D&B to create *Fine Tuning*. Featured are tracks from Future Cut, Total Science, Ray Keith, J Majik and more. With sexy, powerful female vocals and rollin' beats, each track makes you close your eyes and bounce your body to the beat. Released by Dune Recordings, (owned by Montreal-based DJs Double A and Twist) listeners have been given one of D&B's most influential DJ's, and one of his finest mixes. This is definitely an album that should be heard no matter what your mood, from waking-up in the morning, to boarding down the mountain, to gettin' the party started. Every track on this album will absolutely keep you moving. *Fine Tuning Volume One* has laid an awesome platform for future albums to follow, definitely keep your eyes open for this disc and the series that will follow it.

-Matt Jarry



Hangedup
Hangedup
Constellation Records

Hangedup are a duo from Montreal who play interesting, minimalist music. This album explores the range of sounds from only two instruments: drums and viola. *Hangedup* is not an album that offers instant gratification, rather it challenges the listener to engage with it on a deeper level. I think it sounds like folk music played by someone who has no idea what folk music is—perhaps experimental folk is a better description. Like a cross between Sonic Youth, Zubot and Dawson, only with less going on. The more I listened, the more I got out of this album. I feel obligated to write about the beautiful packaging, which was one of the main reasons I decided to acquire *Hangedup*. Time and energy went into achieving the right packaging style, (the secret ingredient is love). It harkens back to the days when record sleeves were pieces of art in their own right. The CD is placed in a raw paper case, which looks as though it was hand printed, and reflects the simple and raw sounds on the disk. *Hangedup* is worth picking up for just the first song "Winternational," which starts things off with a bang. The rest of the album is good, but track one blows them out of the water.

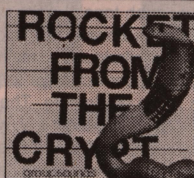
Raymond Bastedo

Reviews Continued.

Les Jardiniers
Moon Patrol
 Haute Couture

I once had a pair of sunglasses which made me feel super cool whenever I wore them, like a young James Bond. Les Jardiniers are like those wonderful sunglasses--listening to them makes me feel cool. Every song is cool; the sort of thing people should listen to in cafes in New York. Les Jardiniers is the sort of music you put on after a night out, when you invite the whole club back to your place; uber-cool underground chill out music. There are enough strange sounds to constantly keep you guessing what will happen next. With traces of '80s electro and some basic dance beats, this is the future as seen by the past. I predict big things for this group: a few choice placements of compilation CD's, private jets, drugs and, of course, their ultimate decline into a self indulgent concept album. I can't think of anyone more deserving than the people behind *Moon Patrol*. With titles such as "Tokyo Racer" and "Vacuum Factory," there can be no stopping them. Even the few songs with vocals manage to sound more interesting than the average song with vocals. Just remember, listening to this album will make you feel cooler than John Welk--if only that were possible.

-Raymond Bastedo



Rocket From the Crypt
Group Sounds
 Vagrant

Following the failed attempt of the San Diego sextet's last album, *Rocket From the Crypt* have decided to make a return to their roots--rough, ready, and proudly independent again, (after a short sojourn on an affiliate of a major). They've even put a line in the credits, "To have RFTC play your town, contact Stormy Sheppard at...." Now, that IS cool--as is the album. No particular surprises, but RFTC have such a unique sound that it doesn't tire you out. That sound is a sort of Stax-Punk, a blaring horn section adding beef to the chopping guitars, and drums being pounded into submission. Speedo, in addition, has one of the great modern-day ROCK voices. The songs? Well, "Carne Voodoo" is a stupid, meaningless classic, and there are plenty of other corksers sprinkled throughout. It's sad that bands can produce albums as good as this, *Hot Charity*, and *Scream Dracula Scream*, and yet be so studiously ignored by most--especially while the apparently never ending juggernaut of monstrous tag nut-beard metal and cartoon punk bands formulate the parameters of what is seen as alternative music to so many. Do your bit, and give this a listen.

-Matthew McDonnell

Metalwood
The Recline
 Blue Thumb Records

When I received Metalwood's latest release, I was immediately interested in giving it a test run. The main reason being that I've enjoyed most of Metalwood's three previous albums. Although these boys tend to venture into the land of the more sophisticated "adult contemporary" sound every now and then, their acoustic jazz roots are a force to be reckoned with. There's no doubt that the members of Metalwood understand the art of improvisation, after all, most of all their recorded work has used this medium as one of their secret weapons. This time around, the arsenal has grown with the addition of a few very special guests. Making their appearance on this project are: guitarist John Scofield, percussionist Mino Cinelu, and

turntablist DJ Logic. This line up certainly proves to be effective throughout the album, especially on tracks like "Bumpus" and "New Pants", where the urban funk aspects have no trouble meeting Metalwood's ability to get a good groove going. The album offers a wide range of spontaneous approaches to the ever widening field of fusion jazz. The sound is tight and sharp, which comes as no surprise considering the caliber of musicians found here. Still, as full as it sounds, there's just not enough Logic on it. There can never be too much Logic.

-B Sauce



King Crimson
The Construction of Light
 Emd/Virgin

I have been putting this off--and by the first track I know why. How age grows quickly, and passion dies abruptly. There is talent displayed here, but the angst or ambiguity of earlier ventures is missing. So far, it sounds like Belew wants to be Tom Waits, and Fripp is merely backing him. It was only an introduction, a taste of the sellout, and a path not taken. The title track opens patiently with Fripp providing the light, then it drops, lands on picturesque picking, and floats to the bottom of a crimson sea. The texture and complexity continue, and any doubt is gone because they have the knack, even with the new guys. Gunn on bass touch and baritone guitar, and Masstelotto on drums keep in stride, and are worthy accompaniment. Fripp seems not to have lost his sense. Belew still has the David Byrne approach to lyrics, and applying electronics, he recreates the tone carried on the *Discipline* album. Overall, this album settles as a happy medium between Fripp and Belew's collaboration--*Discipline* holstered onto the greatness of *Starless and Black Bible*. This album is a wise one, as they have conceptualized a valid album of veracity and virility. It rings of the past, but not without reminding you these guys are king--even with time changing and technology bolting. My doubt was high, but now ambition and excitement remind me that rock and roll still exists, and not everyone withers up and dies. At least not, without a last stand.

-Patrick Ovington

OOIOO
Feather Float
 Birdman

Innocently and unsuspectingly packaged in a Rainbow Brite style cover is a spacey, poly-rhythmic offering to the gods of music. Their musical approach is distinctive, with their hypnotic, repetitive rhythms and percussion amidst bird-like skitters on the opening song "Be Sure To Loop," the tribal chanting and drums of "INA..." (Japanese character here) and the James Brown-like yelps in the song "ASO3AN." *Feather Float* delivers the same high energy that their first self-titled album would have you expect, but without rehashing what ground they've already covered. By the way, The Boredoms, of whom Yoshimi is also a part, have a new album out on Birdman. Long live avant Japanese spacey noise rock! -g-jubey jube

Plaid
Double Figure
 Warp Records

You know how when you play a CD, you have a particular mood that you're working to satisfy, whether it be mellow, tired or even confused? Plaid's *Double Figure* is an album that evokes these feelings, rather than satisfies them. Andy Turner and Ed Hanley (previously with Black Dog Productions) have created a work that, though within the vast expanse of electronica, has been hard to categorize because of its computer-pop sound. *Double Figure* is not a house, techno, or breakbeat album. I feel inclined to call it synth-electropop with a slight fusion of deep house and breakbeats. Tracks like "Assault on Precinct Zero," and "New Family" have odd, almost self-serving beats, which drive the tracks like house does, but they create confusion in the mix between smooth beats and jabby synth melodies. Then there are tracks like "Ti Born" and "Ooh Be Do" that have an electro-breakbeat feel and make your head bob a little, but they end when you get into the groove. After listening to this 70 minute disc almost a dozen times in an attempt to find something that interested me, I was let down. This album made me picture Turner and Hanley sitting in some basement studio with a sampler and keyboard attempting to create a work that would be unlike anything before it--they did, but I don't think that many of us will ever be ready for it. My advice to Plaid is to stick with the Bjork remixes and save the synth-electro work for at-home sessions.

-Matt Jarry



Projektor

Red Wolf Glass
Endearing

I tend to shy away from most indie rock with vocals, because the underlying music is usually ignored in favour of (poorly written) lyrics with affected vocal stylings. Projektor, however, have found a balance between the two, creating a rhythmically atmospheric album with solid drumming, lovely melodic lines (in both vocals and guitar) punctuated with clustered guitar textures, and an overall sparseness that shows confidence and competence in their playing. The lack of vocal pretension is refreshing; instead, the lyrics are simply delivered, allowing the music to compliment them and vice versa. Apparently they're all the rage back home in Winnipeg, which I certainly have no trouble believing.

-g-jubey jubey

Removal

Hello, My Name is Irrelevant
Wrong Records

Well, if the label says Wrong, chances are it's prog rock, and yes, this is prog rock. Removal, in a display of tight musicianship, fuse together driving metal and rock riffs with voice sampling (don't you love it when no one in the band can really sing...so no one does?) to create a holy power chord album. One thing this album can claim is consistency. Each song is comparable to the last, the exception being the second to last track, which is followed by the annoying shout of "work" throughout the final track. But that was the point, I assume. Melodic but heavy, the CD sounds like the kind of music that gets scooped up and put on one of those macho snowboarding and drinking videos; that isn't to say it's not good, just full of that soaring-but-driving instrumentation that seems to soundtrack that type of behavior. Fortunately, this band is more sophisticated than a lot of prog, metal and rock bands, especially in their fusion of the styles. This CD makes a good crossover for anyone who's realized that most crappy Southern California punk bands sound the same, but who still wants some good adrenaline-based music to be aggressive to.

-jennym

Trans-Global Underground

Yes Boss Food Corner
Ark 21 Records

Trans-Global have released an album full of music that one would expect from this group of cross-cultural musicians; East meets West and all that. This album is like a world tour of funky rhythms and interesting instrumentation. Despite claims of

total disregard for musical genres, there is not as much variety as I was hoping for on this album. *Yes Boss Food Corner* may not be limited to 4/4 beats, but it still falls firmly under the house music umbrella. This is Trans-Global's seventh album, making them old age pensioners on the dance scene. While they were ground breaking before, they are sticking to their formula on this release. Rather than pushing the boundaries of what is expected, as Talvin Singh did on his newest release *Ha*. Trans-Global move within the boundaries they have set for themselves on past releases. Having said that, they are able to attract a wide audience from loved-up club kids to forty year-old homemakers. If you like their other stuff, or are just bored with the current dance (trance anyone?) scene, then you will like this. It's different but not as different as I wanted it to be. For more info check out www.ark21.com.

-Raymond Bastedo

Tricky Woo

Les Sables Magiques
Sonic Unyon

Canadian college radio all stars Tricky Woo have created yet another masterpiece. Clocking in at just over 60 minutes, *Les Sables Magiques* contains 11 exquisite tracks that harken back to a time when the term 'Rock and Roll' still meant something. The trio certainly proves their worth as songwriters as this beautifully constructed album easily holds ground with the classic albums from which these Canadian boys get their inspiration. Gorgeous, well-sung lyrics over-lay very competent musicianship to create epic tracks—few of which are under 5 minutes long. The music has all the groove, swagger and soul of '70s southern rock (a goal sought by many bands today, but achieved by few), while still being unique. This album solidifies Tricky Woo's place among the all-too-rare breed of retro bands that progress with each album rather than get stuck in a rut and resort to stealing riffs from their forefathers. *Les Sables Magiques* is a welcome addition to any well-rounded rock and roll collection. This album will inspire you to hot box your El Camino and head down to the Moon Tower for a beer blast.

-Mark PaulHus

Zero Zero

AM Gold
Jade Tree

Robots in love. That is how I can best describe Zero Zero's first album. *AM Gold* is altogether happy-making, with lots of synth, and song titles like

"Pep Sounds." This is a bit surprising, considering two-thirds of Zero Zero is composed of the former punk band, Lifetime. Ari Katz and Dave Idea (Dave Palaitis) have now joined with Miss TK to form this much poppier trio. For me, this album is reminiscent of many a music-filled car-ride. As a child, I was weened off of my mother's Beatles by the very AM radio that is the influence for this album. I can hear little morsels of the mom-rock that used to fill our car—"Pink and Green" sounds like it was born out of the summer of love, while '50s girl-pop is represented by the song "Hello, How Are You?" It is the 80s-influenced pop songs on this album that I enjoy the most, though. These tracks have their roots in the songs that first allowed me to assert my musical independence from my family. Despite a barrage of "retro" CDs, clubs, and Halloween parties, I still have a fondness for the playful attitude of 80s synth-pop that is so well represented on *AM Gold*. This album makes me want to pull out my *El DeBarge* record and sing, "Who's Johnny" at a volume too loud for any parent to tolerate.

-Sara Young

**Twigs**

Epicure
Endearing Records

There is something inherently cute about Scandinavian bands who sing in English (blame it on Bjork). Twigs are especially charming thanks to Katy Penny's honeyed vocals, and the prevalence of relationship songs on this album (I assume—the lyrics were often distorted, or otherwise difficult to decipher). The adorability factor makes it difficult to take even the most desolate lyrics on *Epicure* as they are intended to be taken. Fortunately, I was knocked out of my patronising listening pattern by instrumentation that contrasts sharply with Katy's smooth vocals. Twigs percussion and guitar sounds transit between the extremes of jarring/abrasive and soft/soothing, often nearly overpowering the vocals—an effect that succeeded in drawing me in only to push me away. I often found myself lured into a dreamy, forlorn song, only to be (happily) shocked out of it halfway through. No amount of gritty guitar can disguise

the cuteness of Twigs though: they are signed to Winnipeg's Endearing Records, and will be touring Canada and the US this summer with the help of funding from the Norwegian government—cute.

-Sara Young

Wolf Eyes

S/T
Bulb Records

Now what can I say about Wolf Eyes that hasn't been said already? A lot, as it turns out. I know, the name sounds familiar, but you don't know them, (maybe you're thinking of Bright Eyes or Wolf Colonel) as this excellent CD is their first release. Using a variety of instruments, this duo from Bulb Records create a variety of dark, dissonant songs/noisescares. Think of this as a white rock-influenced version of DJ Spooky's *Necropolis: the Dialogic Project*. Wolf Eyes consistently remain interesting—something which is more and more difficult to do with the current glut of experimental noise and rock out there. Wolf Eyes jackbooted my cynical mind into remembering this stuff doesn't all sound the same...which it can upon hearing CD after CD. So, breaking through the wall of our current Datapanik, comes Wolf Eyes, saving us from musical burnout—folks, it doesn't all have to be the same.

-Adam Jones

Alasdair Roberts

The crook of my arm
Secretly Canadian

On top of being the frontman for Appendix Out and collaborator on numerous new releases, Alasdair Roberts brings us another Scottish masterpiece. This time in the form of a solo project; just his voice and guitar playing twelve traditional Scottish, Irish and English songs. If the past Appendix Out album helped to paint a beautiful picture of the Scottish countryside, this album will take a polaroid for you. Talk about prolific, Roberts is all over the place this year churning out brilliant records, one after another. One can see he must derive a lot of inspiration from these traditional songs for his work with Appendix as they sound like stripped down versions of the band's songs. The songs of course are filled with imagery and beauty, masterpieces that are not in the least undermined by Roberts' deep resonating voice and lightly picked guitar. In the end I find myself like the young girl in "Master Kilby," "asking for more." And judging by his recent track record, I thankfully won't have to wait to long.

-John Welk

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